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December 4, 1903

## HAWAIIAN ISLANDS.

*Report from Honolulu.*

Chief Quarantine Officer Cofer reports, November 14, as follows:  
 Outgoing quarantine transactions at this port for the week ended November 14, 1903:

Number of vessels inspected and bills of health issued .....	8
Vessels disinfected .....	1
Cabin passengers inspected .....	8
Steerage passengers inspected .....	0
Crew inspected .....	62
Pieces of steerage passengers' baggage disinfected and passed .....	0
Pieces of crew's baggage disinfected and passed .....	112
Hides and skins disinfected .....	0
Pieces of freight disinfected .....	0
Passengers and crew declined certifications on account of .....	0

## INDIA.

*Reports from Calcutta—Water supply of Calcutta—Plague and cholera.*

Passed Assistant Surgeon Sprague reports October 27 and November 5, as follows:

As will be seen from the last annual report (1902) of the health officer, forwarded under a separate cover, the drinking water of this city is filtered, and semiweekly examinations, both bacteriological and chemical, are regularly made. The efficiency of the filtration plant is proved by the almost complete absence of water-borne diseases among the European population. Cholera constantly present among the natives is due to the drinking of surface water from tanks, reservoirs, and wells. The water taken on board the ships at this port is probably above the average purity of other ports.

Health Officer Cook informs me that the plague curve for the present year, although not completely made out, practically follows that of the two previous years given in the report, and that is about midway between as I have indicated by a cross. At present cases are rarely seen alive. Owing to the opposition on the part of the natives post-mortem examinations are rarely performed. No attempts are now made to isolate or segregate the cases. This was tried, but it led to concealment, and the removal in some cases came near to causing riots and the plan was abandoned. In the face of such opposition it can readily be seen that little, if anything, could be accomplished in the way of preventing the spread of this disease. The general impression seems to be that the abandonment of the plan was a wise procedure.

Strange to say, the cholera curve follows the plague curve fairly closely, more cases occurring during the winter than during the summer months. Just why such should be the case is not explained by local physicians. There must be some cause, and it may be apparent later.

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Official notice of my arrival and mission has been forwarded to the proper authorities.

The use of rat guards has not yet been ordered for all ships by the port health officer, and, in view of its value as a prevention against

infection of vessels, with the approval of the consul-general I am preparing directions for shipping agents regarding the use of funnels and tar on the ropes and requesting them to notify me when ships are free from cargo, so that I may superintend the work of destruction of rats in the hold.

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November 5, 1903: There is considerable question among well-informed people of unbiased opinion as to the number of cases of plague at present in this city. Last summer the reported cases ran so low that the dismissal of plague inspectors was seriously contemplated. While just now there may be cases improperly diagnosed when not seen until after death, and in absence of a post-mortem examination, there are some, undoubtedly, among the number, of true bubonic plague. This last statement is agreed to by an inspector with whom I have visited some of the infected centers.

Between the main thoroughfares are vast areas, with houses and huts built very closely and in an apparently inextricable confusion, crowded to the last degree with inhabitants. The floors are on the ground; there are no sewers, and the crooked ways between the houses simply reek with filth and moisture. Alongside of some of these paths, between three to four story buildings, are places that through the bars resemble dungeons in which many people live. There are numerous wells with water some 6 feet from the surface used by the natives, which readily account for the continuance of cholera.

When an area becomes notoriously infected, by a slow process of law the buildings may be destroyed, as has been done in numerous instances, and is still being done. But there are so many areas that ought to be so dealt with that it will be years before the work is completed, and then others equally bad will probably have sprung into existence.

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#### ITALY.

##### *Report from Naples—Plague in Mauritius.*

Passed Assistant Surgeon Eager reports November 7, as follows: Week ended November 7, 1903, the following ships were inspected at Naples and Palermo:

##### NAPLES.

Date.	Name of vessel.	Destination.	Steerage passengers inspected and passed.	Pieces of large baggage inspected and passed.	Pieces of baggage disinfected.	Number of steerage passengers recommended for rejection.
Nov. 3	Vancouver.....	Boston .....	893	150	1,100	21
4	Nord America .....	New York .....	848	130	1,075	25
7	Monviso .....	do .....				
7	Perugia .....	do .....	512	70	742	10

##### PALERMO.

Nov. 5	Nord America .....	New York .....	378	150	500	26
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